March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Join us in raising awareness about Developmental Disabilities and promoting inclusive communities!

Nebraskans with disabilities offer the following advice to our friends and neighbors in the community:

- Put me first, not my disability
- Support and advise me, but know that I make the choices about me
- Listen to me and respect my opinion please treat me like one.
- Wait to be asked Be friendly
- A change in my health may be the reason for a change in me
- Don’t use the “R” word. Ever.
- Assume Ability
- I am not a mistake or a burden,
- Invite me along, I’m fun!
- Challenge me, don’t stereotype me
- Talk to me, not just the people with me
- Remember that everyone has bad days
- Not all disabilities

I’m probably interested in some of the same things you are. Ask!

Don’t be afraid to make a mistake.

No one is perfect!

This poster was developed through a grant from the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities.
DON’T FORGET!
to renew your Arc of Omaha membership for 2021.

Weather Policy
The following weather conditions may cause us to close our office and/or cancel/reschedule events.

* Heavy, accumulating, blowing and drifting snow
* Ten degrees or more below zero and/or wind chill
* Ice, sleet and/or freezing rain

If the weather is questionable, our services will be canceled.

If Omaha Public Schools cancel their day/evening activities and/or staff deem it unsafe for travel our services will be canceled.

Note: If you are not sure if an evening/weekend event will be held or canceled, call 402.346.5220 and/or check our Facebook page for event updates. Most decisions will be posted by 3:00 p.m. for evening activities, and 8:00 a.m. for daytime activities.

2021 Arc of Omaha Membership Drive!
“Time and money spent in helping people to do more for themselves is far better than mere giving.” ~ Henry Ford

This has been a difficult year for all of us, but the impact of COVID-19 on individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families has been especially devastating. Many of our clients are still largely self-quarantining due to underlying health conditions and have limited access to their cherished friends, hobbies, and routines.

Please consider becoming an Arc of Omaha member today so our clients can safely enjoy virtual adaptations of programs such as the First and Next Chapter Book Clubs, Friends and Best Buddies Mentoring Programs, and sibling and parent support.

Becoming a member for 2021 is easy! Options start at just $25. This can be done by mail (fill out the form below) or online at www.olliewebbinc.org. The benefits of continued membership include:

- Use of the Ollie Webb Center, Inc. pass to Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo. Pass use is unlimited based on availability and entitles 2 adults and up to 6 children free admission to the zoo.
- Discounts on many activities and events sponsored by The Arc of Omaha. For more information, please reference our monthly newsletter or www.olliewebbinc.org.
- Support from The Arc of Nebraska and The Arc of the United States, including representation at local, state, and national policy forums and publications on a variety of topics.
- The satisfaction of supporting a local community agency that tirelessly informs the public of the needs, rights, and abilities of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Your Arc of Omaha membership sends a strong message in support of the rights of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Please consider becoming a member today!

The Arc of Omaha 2021 Membership Form
Thank you for your past support! Please consider once again being a part of our team!

Name(s) ___________________________________________________________________________
(As you wish it to appear when we publicly recognize our members.)

Address ____________________________________________________________________________
City/State______________________________________________________ Zip _________________

Phone _________________________ E-mail _______________________________

*May we send our monthly newsletter to your email address:   ____Yes     ____No

Please circle:
Single $25    Family $40    Contributing $75    Sustaining $100    Corporate $150

☐ I would like to sponsor an additional single membership for a person who is unable to pay, for an additional $25

Total amount enclosed:  $______________  Your contribution is tax deductible.

Please make your check payable to Ollie Webb Center, Inc. Mail this form and your check to:
Ollie Webb Center, Inc., 1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 122, Omaha, NE 68105

Zoo Pass Available to 2021 Arc Members!
The Arc of Omaha has a free Family Zoo Pass available for use by its 2020 members. It allows two adults and four children to visit the Henry Doorly Zoo. Please note the following rules for its use:

1. The pass can be used anytime the zoo is open.
2. Families may use the pass as often as they like, as long as it is available.
3. Families using the pass must sign it out, giving their name, address, phone number, date of use and date returned. If a family misuses the pass, it is possible that the pass may not be available for them to use again.
4. When families arrive at the zoo, they must present the pass and check in at the Visitors Center.

Call 402.346.5220 to reserve the Family Zoo Pass.
Best Buddies is a peer mentoring program for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through this program, adults with disabilities are matched to Creighton college students and participate in social and recreational activities, enabling these individuals to experience friendships with peers.

Best Buddies is the world's largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Best Buddy programs like ours empower the special abilities of people with disabilities by helping them form meaningful friendships with peers, secure successful jobs, live independently, improve public speaking, self-advocacy and communication skills, and feel valued by society.

**BEST BUDDIES IN NEBRASKA BEGINNER AMBASSADOR TRAINING**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH**
JOIN US ON ZOOM AT 11 AM CENTRAL

If you would like additional information about the Beginner Ambassador Training, please email Alexa Edwards at aedwards@olliewebbinc.org.

**Best Buddies Spring 2021 Schedule of Events**

**MARCH**
*Stream Creighton Basketball*
Date: TBD

*Ambassador Training - Optional*
Date: March 14th from 11 am - 1 pm

Please note that the Ambassador Trainings are put on by Best Buddies International and are completely optional for any individual with and without disabilities in Nebraska.

Link to register: https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwtc-irqzktGNbOx1eBTraJqLcJ8adw5gm

**APRIL**
*Movie Event*
Date: April 18th from 1 pm - 3 pm

**MAY**
*Kahoot Event*
Date: May 2nd from 1 pm - 3 pm

*(Noah Keime, VP of Creighton University's Best Buddies program, will email Zoom links to participants the week of each event)*

Alexa Edwards, Program Coordinator • aedwards@olliewebbinc.org
Book Clubs meet once a week for an hour as a small group at a local coffee shop to read and discuss a book. All reading levels can participate! Members enjoy social connections and the delight of expanding their literacy.

Next Chapter Book Club

BOOKS, NEWS, AUDIOBOOKS AND MORE!

The creativity and flexibility of Volunteer Facilitators and their group members has been outstanding!

- We have a few groups whose Volunteer Facilitators have been running as go-betweens between the Program Coordinator and group members, delivering and dropping off books from the OWCI NCBC library.
- Another group has decided to focus their reading time on current sports, movies, and music news. Together, the group reads the latest online articles together and discusses them.
- Yet another group has utilized audiobooks and e-books, which the Volunteer Facilitators share with the group during the meetings.
- Although everyone acknowledges that meeting on Zoom is not the same as in person, members of these groups are remaining engaged with one another while embracing technology.
- Inspired by the innovation of the groups above, OWCI NCBC just created a new “pop-up” virtual book club for individuals whose groups are currently on hiatus. This group began in late January and will continue through the end of April. This group is off to a strong start and it has been wonderful to see familiar faces join a new group where they are creating bonds and sharing the adventure of reading.

Friendship & literacy in a community setting!

Tara Waln-Lewellyn, Program Coordinator • twaln-lewellyn@olliewebbinc.org
The Ultimate Life program is a fee-based companion recreation program for adults aged 18 and older with developmental disabilities. This program offers opportunities for adults to participate in small, planned group activities or one-on-one outings of their choice in the community. Trained staff accompany participants and transportation to and from the activities is part of the program. APPLY NOW! Registration fee is $30.

BEATING THE WINTER BLUES!

Looking for a way to beat the winter blues? Are you curious about trying one of our Virtual Ultimate Life activities? Anyone can join virtual Ultimate Life events for $10.00 an event. We are not charging a membership fee for participating online and you can sign up for as many events as you want. We take reservations up to 24 hours before an event.

Come join the party!
Join old friends and make new ones through evenings full of fun and laughter!

Some of our Past Events:
Thanksgiving Dinner and Holiday Party
We’ve Got Talent!
Holiday Costume and Ugly Sweater Contest
Harry Potter Costume and Trivia Night
Creative Occupations Game Night

Our Monthly Events
Dinner with Friends
Game Night
Dance Party
Karaoke Night
Line Dancing

Upcoming Special Events
Valentine’s Day Party
Saint Patrick’s Day Celebration

And don’t forget about our FREE Midweek Movie Madness event held monthly!
The Art of Imagination classes are focused on the visual and performing arts. Classes offer artistic opportunities in traditional art forms such as painting, writing, drawing and photography and more. Theater classes include improvisation, playwriting, scripted pieces and radio drama culminating in rehearsals and public performances.

Theater Studies: Oh Great Dionysius!

This is the second semester that The Art of Imagination (AoI) has offered a Theater Studies class. Theater Studies was conceived to be a comprehensive course that would cover theater history, theatrical concepts, great playwrights, plays, actors, and more. During the first semester, participants in the class expressed much interest and excitement in regard to the subjects covered in the course, including Shakespeare, Chekhov, international theater, Elizabethan theater, the Globe Theater, and the local Omaha theater community.

This winter, as a companion to the AoI’s upcoming fall 2021 theater production, the Theater Studies class is focusing on ancient Greek Theater with AoI Managing Director Carrie Nath and Artistic Director Jim Hoggatt as course instructors. The class is studying Greek myths, architecture, theater and arts, music, history and language. Local theater artist Carole Waterman is the Cultural Consultant and Musical Director for the project. She has already presented two workshops in the class with more planned. Continuing Education Manager David Ackermann and the playwriting class have helped to write the script for the play and other AoI courses will support this show with costumes and prop design, playwriting and dramaturgy.

After two successful inclusive theater productions produced by OWCI in 2018 and 2019, the goal of The Art of Imagination program continues to focus on promoting equal access and opportunities for individuals with and without disabilities to develop and showcase their talents in the visual and performing arts. The production is titled Oh Great Dionysia! and is scheduled to perform at the Scottish Rite in the fall of 2021.
The Continuing Education program extends the learning experience beyond high school. Classes are offered in a variety of formats and settings and focus on independent living, money management, social and employment-related skills. Courses provide a person-centered approach that focuses on increased independence as opposed to the maintenance of skills. A five day-a-week program is available and follows a typical college schedule.

Learning the Importance of Work/Life Balance

As we approach the one-year mark of the pandemic, many people continue to focus on achieving a positive balance between work/classes and home life. As a result, learning about strategies to stay mentally and physically fit is more critical than ever. To this end, OWCI continues to offer continuing education classes emphasizing health promotion, exercise, nutrition, and work/life balance.

Since the summer, our team has been delivering classes online with participants attending from home. In the past, there was always a clear physical division between attending OWCI classes on-site or in the community versus engaging in personal activities at home. Now, with individuals participating in classes from home, the line between online learning and activities of daily living has become blurred.

Instructors and class participants alike have had to adjust to the many distractions naturally occurring at home impacting class and learning time: family members, pets, television, doorbells, phones, and more. Despite these challenges, both parties have risen to the occasion and are learning the importance of maintaining separation between classes and home life. We asked participants in our HealthMatters program about what kinds of things they were enjoying learning in classes that are helping them work towards achieving a positive balance between home and work/classes throughout the pandemic:

- “We learned about kindness to each other during COVID. I have better friendships.”
- “We do yoga and tai chi for stress.”
- “I like the guided meditations and Qi Gong and I have learned to exercise at home.”
- “We talk about what is going on in our lives.”
- “It helps me to keep moving by exercise.”
- “I learn how to make healthy food and we work out with karate and boxing.”
- “This class teaches me how to make healthy food.”

Instructors have implemented and shared common tips and tricks to help keep participants feeling motivated and productive while reminding them that mental health is just as important as physical health. Some of these include strategies on how to limit distractions, create daily routines and goals, take short breaks, explore personal wellness, and identify ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle, just to name a few. Classes are designed to help participants carry these skills over to everyday life and find the best ways to blend and balance personal and professional commitments.
Supported employment is a community-based work option for adults with developmental disabilities. Supported employment is based on the premise that work should be accessible to everyone, regardless of disability. By providing the necessary support, people with disabilities increase their opportunity for community integration, independence and productivity. Services in this area include: Job Development and Job Coaching.

**Job Fairs and Career Resources**

For the motivated job seeker, the Omaha area offers multiple great resources for gaining exposure to jobs and companies. Over the last year, many job fairs have been offered as virtual or “drive-thru” events. “Drive-thru” fairs provide job seekers an opportunity to get employer and job listings at specified locations where they receive resources, including employer ads and flyers as well as instructions on how to apply to companies online. Applicants can also leave a copy of their resume to be shared with all employers participating in the job fair.

Virtual job fairs mimic in-person fairs, and provide many of the same opportunities as a result. An informative and helpful website to research upcoming career fairs is [https://jobfairsnebraska.com/](http://https://jobfairsnebraska.com/) which includes an updated list of employers who are hiring, tips for attending job fairs, and how to register to receive monthly updates on fairs and jobs. Another valuable resource is Heartland Workforce Solutions at [https://hws-ne.org/](http://https://hws-ne.org/), an American Job Center and non-profit workforce network serving Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties. OWCI also works closely with Nebraska VR to help find and retain jobs for persons with disabilities. According to their website, last year Nebraska VR provided employment services to nearly 7,000 individuals with disabilities, 2,026 of whom were successfully employed. Job seekers can get employment and self-advocacy resource information delivered to their inbox by signing up for Nebraska VR’s Employment Kick-Start program at [www.vr.nebraska.gov/kickstart.html](http://www.vr.nebraska.gov/kickstart.html).

Other online resources include job boards where job seekers can set up an account and upload a current resume to find and apply to jobs directly, including [www.Indeed.com](http://www.Indeed.com), [https://careerlink.com](https://careerlink.com), [www.snagajob.com](http://www.snagajob.com), [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com), and many more. These resources offer a variety of support to job seekers from helping to create a resume from scratch and sharing job listings that are just one-click to apply. Other job boards ask job seekers to create a profile, upload their resume, and track applications as well as direct applicants to apply on the employer’s website. If job seekers have limited access to the internet, the Omaha Public Library system is open to the public and has computers for use.

Whether you are looking for in-person or remote jobs, participating in virtual and “drive thru” job fairs are a great place to start. OWCI’s employment team is ready to help with both virtual and in-person job searching so please contact Lisa Dougherty or Craig Kneifl for more information about job development services.
Independent living services provide instruction for individuals who live in their own home (apartment or house) or in their family’s home. Education, training and support is provided to maintain or increase independent living skills, such as money management, health and safety, interpersonal relations, community awareness, recreational skills, nutrition, hygiene and leisure.

The Benefits of Exercise

Pandemic quarantines and isolation have led to changes in health and exercise habits for many people. Some have seen unexpected weight gain; interruption in sleep patterns; disruption to daily routines; challenges eating healthy and exercising; and isolation and boredom. Participants in OWCI’s Independent Living program have been prioritizing their health and wellness, focusing on physical activity and nutrition. Staying healthy and active is good for both the body and the mind. As gyms and fitness centers have reopened, OWCI staff have been able to assist individuals in getting regular exercise and workouts. Staff have helped ensure that participants are wearing their masks at all times; sanitizing equipment before using it; and maintaining appropriate social distancing from other community members.

Featured here is Amanda, a longtime participant of OWCI’s residential program. Amanda has been enjoying Zumba Water Aerobics every Friday morning accompanied by Lisa McMichael, Independent Living Manager for OWCI. Lisa shared that, “Individuals are wearing their masks until they get in the pool and then once in the pool, everyone is doing a great job of social distancing. Amanda is so much happier now that she is able to return to some of her regular routines. She especially enjoys conversing with the other swimmers at the pool and looks forward to Fridays.” Although snowfall and storms have been the predominant weather trend in 2021, once things warm up, Independent Living participants and staff will be taking advantage of local parks and outdoor activities. Spring is hopefully just around the corner!
### Administrative Office Staff
402.346.5220

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Ext.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laurie Ackermann</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Dougherty</td>
<td>Compliance Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Megan Hillebrandt</td>
<td>Controller</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenny Koley</td>
<td>Receptionist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin McArthur</td>
<td>Operations Director</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan Stocking</td>
<td>Executive Assistant</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
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### Program Support Staff
402.346.5220 or 402.342.4418

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Ext.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Ackermann</td>
<td>Education Services Manager</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aimee Addison</td>
<td>Health &amp; Wellness Services Coordinator</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dave Brown</td>
<td>Independent Living Services Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexa Edwards</td>
<td>Mentoring Services Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Hoggatt</td>
<td>Artistic Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Craig Kneifl</td>
<td>Interim Employment Services Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa McMichael</td>
<td>Independent Living Services Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carrie Nath</td>
<td>Managing Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tara Waln-Lewellyn</td>
<td>Personal Development Services Coordinator</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheri Albin</td>
<td>Family Services Coordinator</td>
<td>14</td>
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For more information about Ollie Webb Center, Inc. activities and programs, you can pull up our website on your smart phone QR app! It's Free!